



MEETING OF INTERCULTURAL CITIES' COORDINATORS

Odessa, 25-26 September 2019

MEETING REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

Cities that are member of the international Intercultural Cities network hold coordination meetings once per year to take stock of achievements, put forward new challenges, and prepare the next programme of work with a view to further develop both the intercultural cities' network and the intercultural integration policy model.

This year meeting was hosted by the city of Odessa, Ukraine, on 25-26 September. The programme included, for the first time, a “systemic design” session on strengthening the ICC Programme and Network. In fact, the Intercultural Cities network has grown from 11 to over 130 members in 11 years, encompassing a broader range of countries and national integration models. The ICC programme has also expanded the set of issues it covers, with an increasing focus on human rights, equality and inclusion. Systemic design is an emerging methodology for assessing the role of different elements and processes in complex systems, their interaction, weaknesses and strengths. After a welcoming speech by the Mayor of Odessa, and an information session by the ICC team to share the outcomes of the 2019 programme of activities, the systemic design methodology has been used to review in-depth the modus operandi of the ICC programme so that it corresponds better to the expectations of member cities, their capacity to implement the commitments undertaken when joining the programme, and enhance the take-up of methodologies and tools proposed by ICC.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE MAIN ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN 2019

A series of presentations by the ICC team focused on the outcomes of a wide range of activities and initiatives undertaken during the past 12 months, as well as the new manuals and guidance published under the programme.

More specifically, coordinators received information on the following activities:

- Intercultural integration Academies and information sessions (Iceland, March 2019; Latvia and Estonia, May 2019; United Kingdom, October 2019): ICC Academies are 2-3 days intensive and immersive courses delivered to a public of city officials (targeting new member cities or cities that are in the process of joining the ICC programme) with the goal of streamlining the process of appropriating ICC concepts and tools. The topic chosen by the recipients of this year Academies included the basics of the intercultural approach to diversity and inclusion,

intercultural competence and intercultural dilemmas, participatory heritage mapping and urban planning, anti-rumours, and intercultural communication.

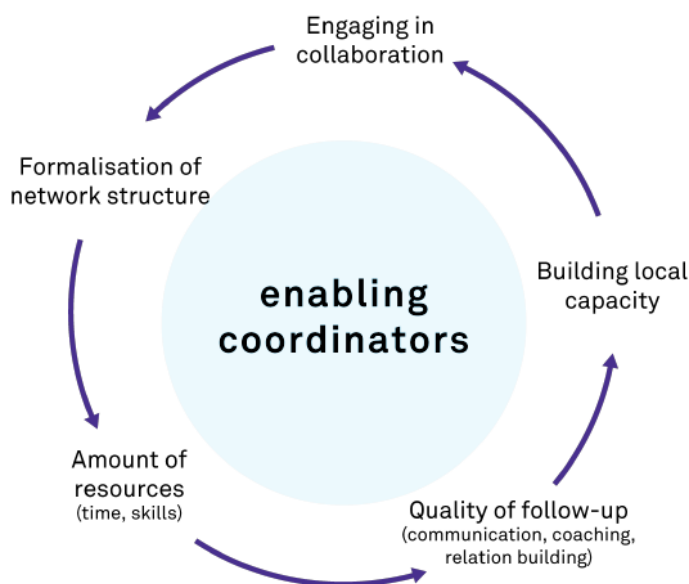
- Thematic event “Fighting discrimination and hate speech: is Interculturalism the solution?” (Turin, June 2019): organised to promote inclusive intercultural strategies vs a mere anti-discrimination approach, to reinforce traditional and legal anti-discrimination tools through the ICC triangle, and to encourage cooperation & interdepartmental work, the Event addressed six specific topics and delivered a set of recommendations for member cities to implement. A detailed [meeting report](#) is available online in English and French.
- Mapping of diverse cultural heritage: presentation of the methodology drawn from the STEPS pilot project implemented by the ICC programme in Lisbon and Rijeka. Experience of Intercultural Cities shows that heritage can be a source and occasion to promote contact, exchanges and reciprocity if the focus of public policies shifts from protection of specific objectives to the promotion of the interactive nature of cultural heritage. Participatory mapping of diverse cultural heritage has proven to be a valuable resource for the protection of a sense of place in the face of growing standardisation and gentrification. The [methodology](#) is available online in several languages.
- First working group on smart indicators (Lublin, June 2019): workshop held in Lublin on 11-12 June to explore how the impact of intercultural integration policies could be measured. The group agreed to the need to – on one hand - identify indicators and data sources that can prove the overall effectiveness of intercultural policies in terms of community cohesion; on the other hand, be able to prove what types of contact activities work best, at the micro level, to promote interaction. It was agreed that, ideally, it should be possible to measure continuously the community cohesion climate via some kind of “barometer”. Besides, a genuine impact measurement instrument would allow to assess the results both of activities which have been deliberately designed to optimise contact, and of regular activities in which diverse people participate by default. The [meeting report](#) is available online.
- Third international Policy Lab meeting: held in Helsinki in May 2019, the third meeting of the Policy Lab continued work on a Model Integration Strategy for the national level and identified the areas of the document which needed to be further explored. A fourth meeting is scheduled to take place in Limassol (November 2019), and will count with the presence of two new states that asked to integrate the group, bringing the overall number of national authorities to 16. The [conclusions of the meeting](#) are available online.
- Strategic partnerships with other International Organisations: the ICC team informed on a number of activities that are ongoing in partnership with the UNHCR, the OECD, and the European Assembly of Regions.
- Latest ICC Publications: the ICC team informed that the [Manual for Intercultural Community Policing](#) has been released in English on the occasion of the International Day Against Racial Discrimination, and that French, Italian, Spanish and Ukrainian versions are in production. Besides, the [ICC Updated Step-by-step guide](#) has been just released in English and will be soon available in French and Portuguese.

3. SYSTEMIC DESIGN SESSION

3.1 Needs assessment

Namhan, a Brussels-based company ran a systemic design session of two half days based on the previous assessment of the needs, constraints and expectations of both the ICC team and the ICC coordinators of a sample of member cities. The outcomes of the assessment phase were the following:

- **Structure:** the ICC network operational structure in the field is very diverse and not clearly formalised. Implementing the programme is more efficient when legal entities are in place (e.g. ICC coordinators working in NGOs), especially for network coordinators. In these cases, there is a staff and a body of know-how which helps cities' coordinators to find resources to run the programme at their level.
- **Resources:** ICC coordinators are aware they could do more. Amount of time, staff and know-how at the cities' level do not seem to be enough to be effective. The time spent by ICC coordinators on the programme is very variable, often very little. When it comes to the ICC national networks, the multitasking nature of the role of ICC national coordinator often prevents them from specialising, or maintaining a regular communication with the cities.
- **Collaboration:** some ICC national coordinators keep in touch and expressed a strong wish to build a common strategy. Similar insights were expressed by one city in particular. Indeed, collaboration seems to be insightful when tailored on common topics/issues/geographical areas. In this context, some cities would appreciate targeted proposals.



- **Other networks:** big cities participate in many different programmes, and it seems there is no dialogue with those. In this circumstance, it is hard to see the added value of ICC and, since “cities do not breathe, while coordinators are restrained”, ICC might move down in the list of priorities.

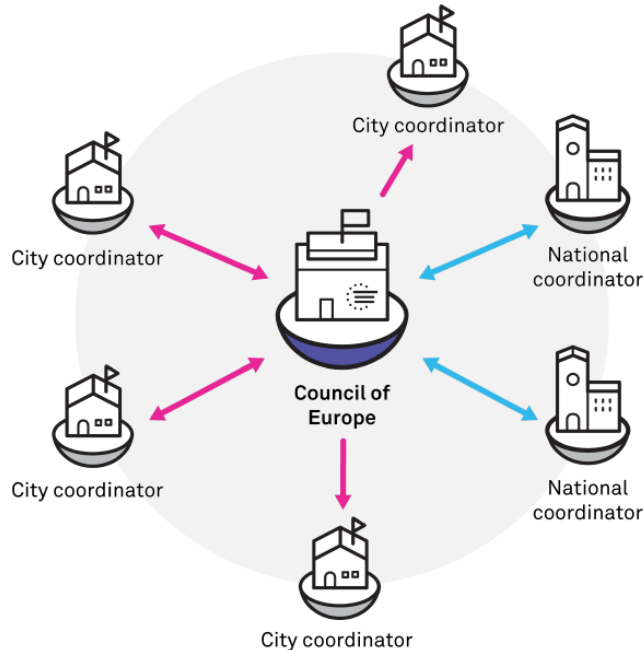
- **Local capacity:** some cities need in-depth coaching to run the ICC programme effectively and maintain their commitment. Also, if no stable staff takes care of the programme and the mayor changes, it's about “starting from scratch”.

- **Tools:** ICC resources need to become a real learning tool for cities. The

index appears to be the most important resource used by the cities. But still, not all of them are able to fill it in correctly.

Despite this, all ICC coordinators interviewed agreed that the current ICC tools are very valuable and there is a general satisfaction related to the responsive communication with Strasbourg.

3.2 Methodological approach of the systemic design session



Based on this assessment, participants in the meeting of ICC coordinators worked in groups on depicting an “ideal ICC programme and network”, taking the actual situation as a starting point (see figure on the left).

They started by identifying the “human drives” that could become a source of inspiration for ideation and co-design; they “bodystormed” to explore how the dynamic of interactions between the cities, the ICC team, and the national network could change; they concentrated in “prototyping” the future ICC programme and network by proposing their “ideal configuration”; they finally checked the value of their proposals by addressing five paradox to their models,

connecting the different elements to bring evidence that they reinforce each other, and considering the impact of their proposals as well as the resources and commitment required to implement them.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ivana D'Alessandro • Annabelle Janette Saffran • Kseniya Khovanova Rubicondo • Abderrahman Lamrani • Isabelle Graux • Jessica Lagacé-Banville 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Francesca Lionetti • Dani De Torres • Rosy De Paoli • Atle Melangen • David Wonik Im • Anna Kristinsdóttir • Lisa Tabor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irena Guidikova • Kate McNicholas • Asaf Ron • Nenad Bogdanovic • Chrissa Geraga • Alisha Abate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alona Diachenko • Gemma Pinyol • Amil Sharifov • Obajimi Adefiranye • Rana Dyab

Workshop facilitators: Stefanos Monastiridis (smo@namahn.com), Sabrina Tarquini (sta@namahn.com)

3.3 Outcomes of the working groups

Human drives

Human drives cards were used to identify the shared values that - according to the participants - best describe the ICC value proposition. All groups agreed upon generating **impact** as being the priority. Three groups mentioned **the feeling of belonging** to the ICC network and **sharing**, while two groups selected the network's **capability to influence**. The groups identified other sets of similar values such as **learning, bonding** and **exchange**.

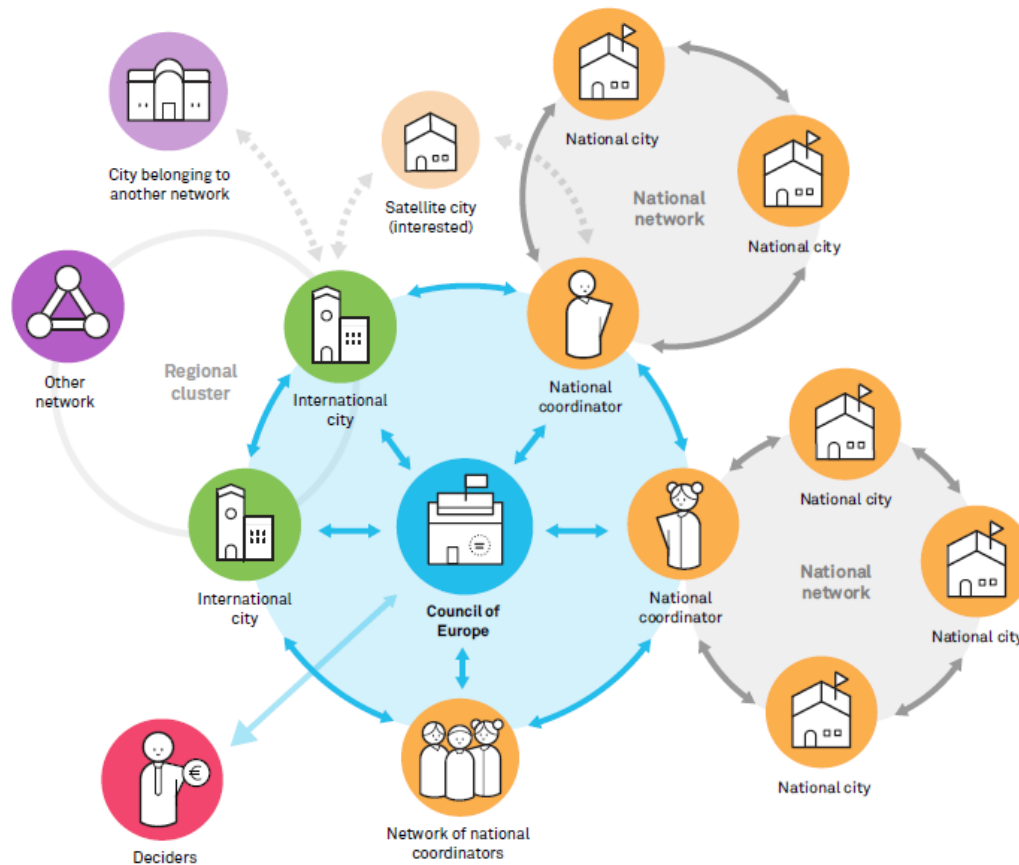
Ideal network – Team 1



Team 1 designed its ideal network as a network of international (cities) coordinators and national (network) coordinators, exchanging and communicating practices, and providing regular feedback to each other and back and forth to the Council of Europe. Cities would always share good practices with the Council and might (and would be encouraged to) communicate with external, non-ICC networks too, especially when these might have the potential to join the network. National coordinators would form a group to meet and exchange. Cities in national networks and

international cities would also talk to each other directly but providing feedback to the Council of Europe so that the latter can keep the whole network informed and showcase good cities' practices. International cities wishing so, would also form smaller regional or thematic networks and coordinate among themselves, providing feedback once a year. The Council would be able to also inform decision makers (at the level of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers) about the activities of the whole network, so to ensure the sustainability (including financially) of the ICC programme on the long-term.

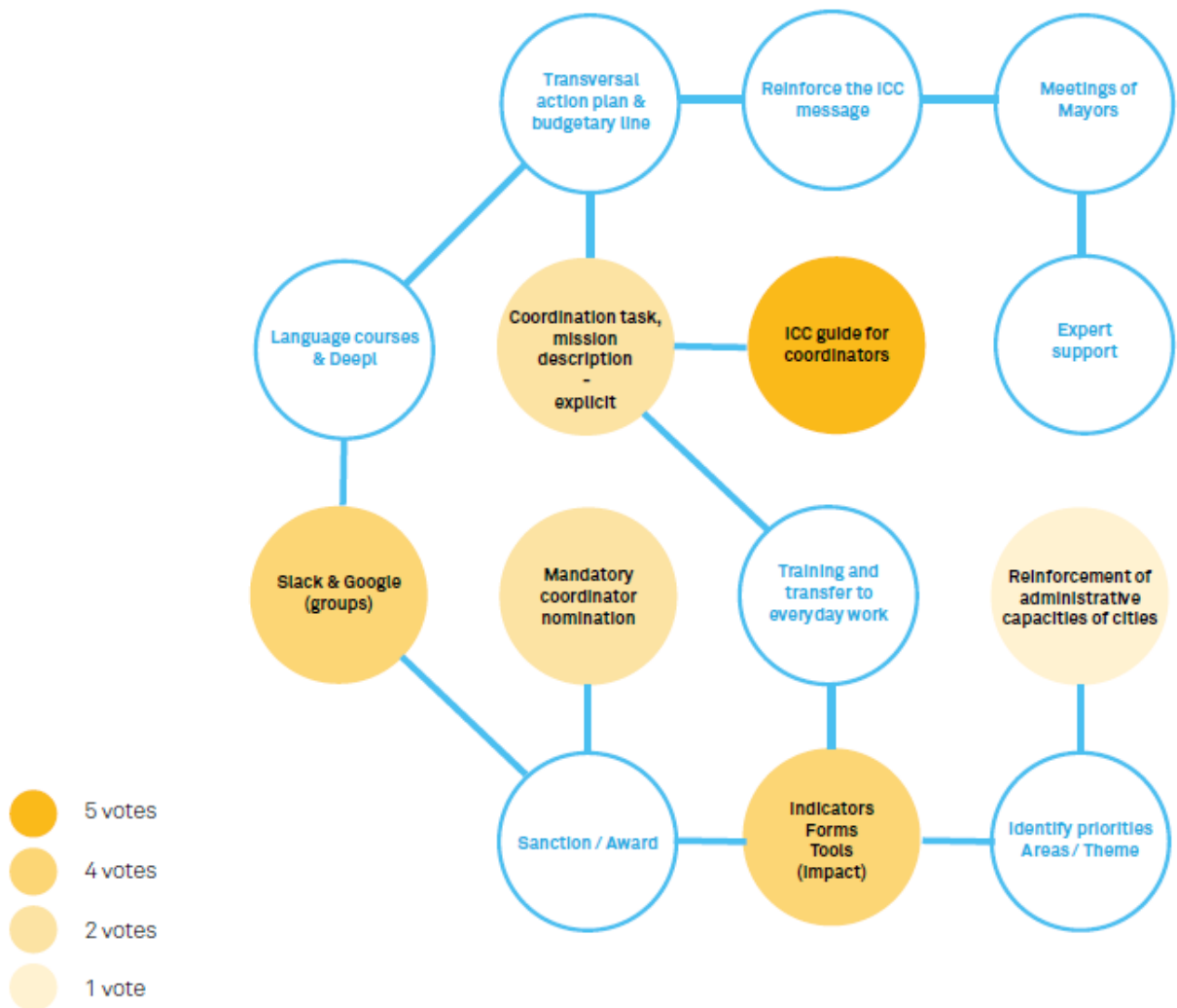
Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing info and practices by direct links (shorter path)• More connections, fluidity• Working on common topics• Each city has a public profile• Helping each other, solidarity on regional level• Higher impact on decision makers (CoE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring coordinators are granted enough time for their work• Sustainability over time (e.g. political changes)• Making sure the Council of Europe receives appropriate feedback to be able to do its part of work• Ensuring that participation in the ICC programme does not fall back on one person



The **strategy** for the running of such a network consists in:

- Reinforcing the role of the city coordinators, who are appointed directly and officially by the mayor, and whose mission description is prepared by the Council and integrated in their job description. This allows for the official recognition of the position of ICC coordinator within the municipal administrative structure, so to enable them devoting time for achieving their tasks. Such a configuration would also allow for working on a transversal action plan and budget (like it is often the case for gender equality policies), involving all the departments in the city, and with the necessary resources (both human and financial).
- Providing occasions for ICC Mayors and/or high-level Directors to meet and exchange, with a view to create sense of belonging and a strong and coherent ICC message. This could also increase support to interculturalism across political parties.
- Applying sanctions if reporting/feedback to the CoE does not happen (including exclusion for breach of the ICC statement of intent), or – alternatively and preferably - giving public annual awards for the best practices.
- Providing clear indicators to evaluate the immediate impact of actions with a view to identifying priority areas and/or thematic. To this end, CoE would provide coordinators with clear indicators and tools (checklists), based on examples provided by cities that are already using these.

- Reinforcing local capacity, by mapping the skills and competences of city officers, so that they can train and mentor their colleagues. This would help fostering intercultural competencies among the staff, and providing recognition from colleagues.
- Facilitating informal communication (e.g. Slack, Google groups), and supporting “informal” translations with AI tools (eg. DeepL Professional) to overcome the language barriers among cities and with the Council of Europe. Cities could also engage volunteering staff members to deliver language courses to their colleagues.



Ideal network – Team 2

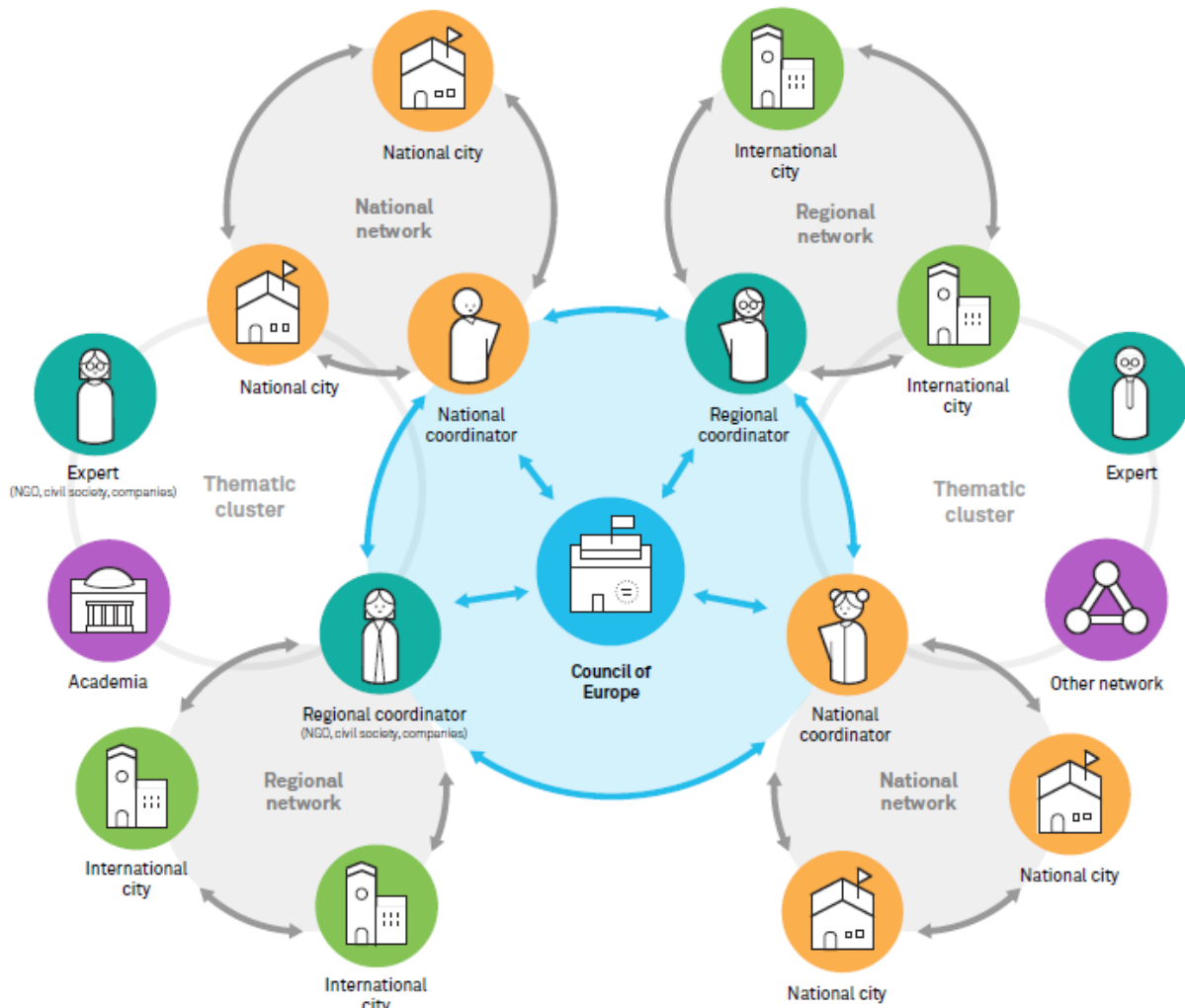
The network imagined by **team 2** consists of national/regional networks and thematic clusters, gathering both international cities and cities belonging only to national networks. Clusters would prioritise projects that last a certain amount of time, allowing cities to build opportunities and create bonding. Experts would support the thematic clusters. Civil society, NGOs, companies would play a role in providing resources to sustain the network. The ICC team would facilitate international connections to avoid the clusters becoming too closed.



The starting point for such a model is that it is often harder for cities member of the international ICC network (rather than for cities in national networks) to build a sense of belonging. Regional and thematic clusters would help keeping more intensive exchanges and consolidating successful experiences. Some cities of the Spanish network of Intercultural Cities are already experiencing partnerships with cities that are member of the ICC international network on specific projects. This setting works well provided it's facilitated by CoE. Budget constraints for the implementation of specific projects could be easily overcome through prioritisation with a long-term and impact perspectives.

Finally, ICC experts could be used more often as a resource, particularly to provide support for the implementation of thematic projects.

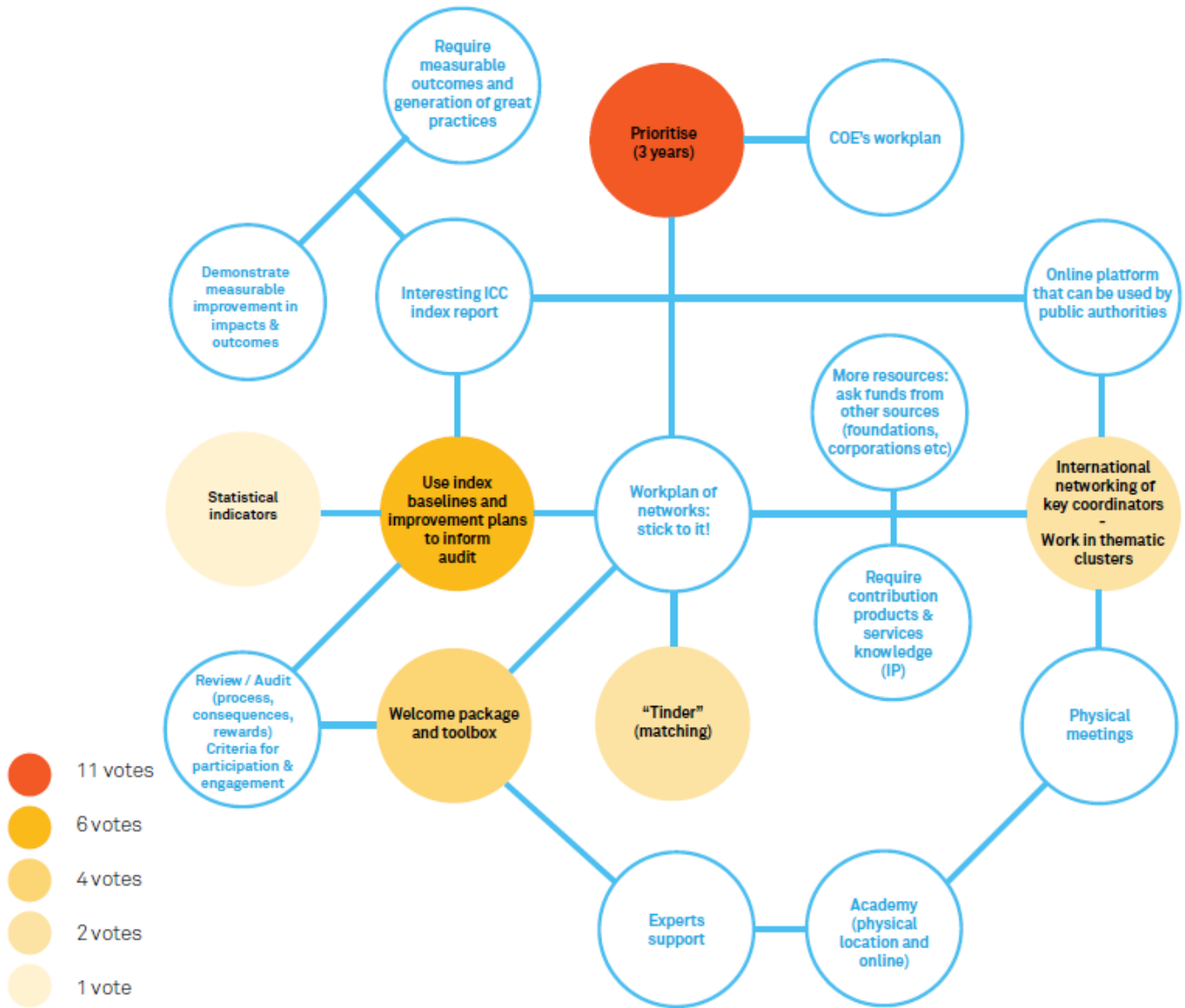
Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More distributed workload• Targeted, efficient communication• Sense of belonging• Higher impact and influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clusters can become too “closed”• Less communication cities between cities and CoE• More workload for regional coordinators• Resources, investments needed



The **strategy** for the running has the following key points:

- Using ICC index baselines for reporting, audit and improvement plans, in view of the elaboration of a clear workplan for the network.
- Using statistical indicators for impact measurement.
- Prioritising (for national and regional networks): giving three years to work on priorities, which would be communicated to the overall network via CoE and uploaded to an online platform accessible also by public authorities. Work would be carried out through online interactions, physical relationships, intentional networking of key coordinators, and/or in thematic clusters. Profiles of cities would be uploaded in the online platform so to facilitate matching according to each other interests.
- Fundraising through approaching foundations, private companies, and NGOs; selling knowledge, products and merchandising could be other ways.
- Providing a welcome package and toolbox for new cities. Newcomers can benefit from expert support and online-offline intercultural academy.

- Reviewing criteria for participation and engagement in the ICC programme and network.

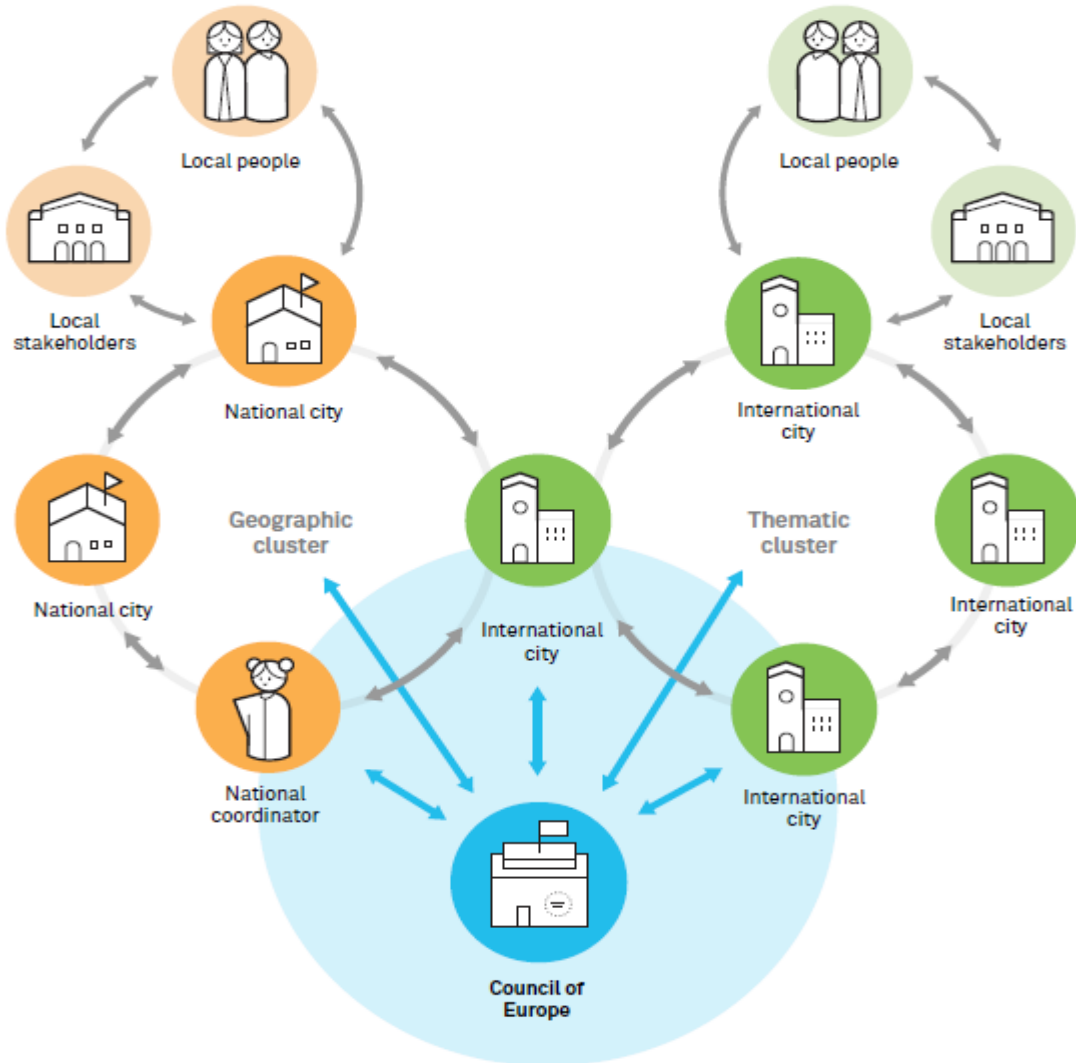


Ideal network – Team 3



The network imagined by team 3 revolves around two types of clusters, coordinated by CoE.

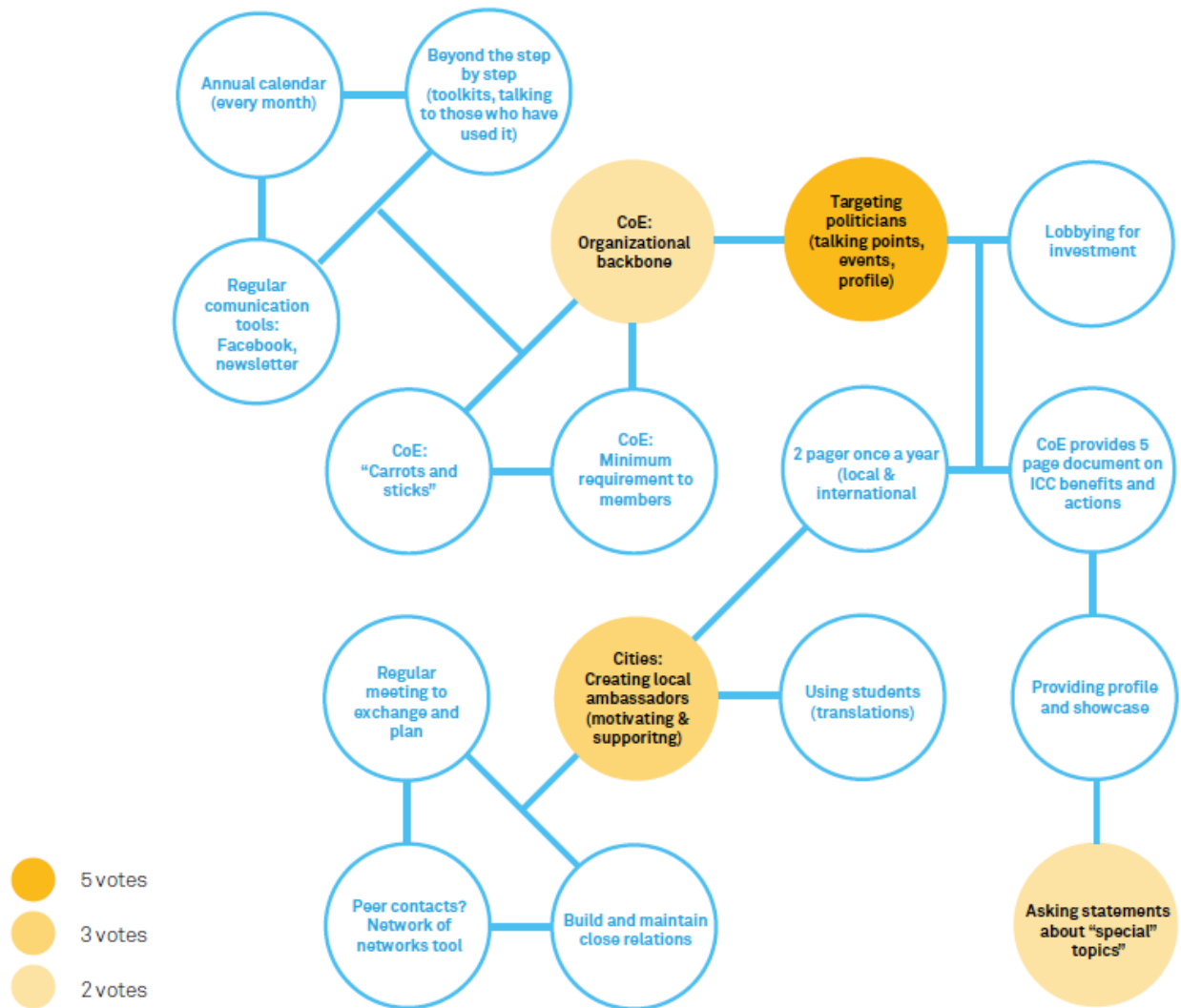
In the geographic clusters, cities would be grouped according to proximity. Cities would connect to national coordinators and to other cities, while local stakeholders (city administration, academia, migrant associations, ...) and people would be kept in the loop too. National coordinators would ensure regular communication with the Council of Europe and provide the necessary feedback. In the thematic clusters, cities are connected by common themes they are working on.



Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearer theme focus • More engagement • Better use of tools/resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language • Capacity, time • Distance

The **strategy** of this model is based on the consideration that a network is about communication. Therefore communication between cities should also inform prioritization, and the latter should happen on several levels, including a small number of projects and themes for which CoE would provide high level support, and projects where city networks take over alone. Local stakeholders would be included in the endeavour: city administrations should not be the sole actors but they could be able to count also on academia, migrant associations, and experts. The strategy would therefore consists of the following points:

- CoE would be the organizational backbone of the network and provide minimum requirements for ICC coordinators. Such requirements would include a way to involve local stakeholders.
- Introducing new communication tools (*participants mentioned a newsletter and the monthly publication of the annual calendar of activities, which however already exist and should be perhaps only made more visible*).
- Introducing a 5-page document from the Council, summarising the ICC benefits/actions. This would be used for lobbying. (*This document also already exists but it is sent out only to new cities or to cities wishing to form a national network; it could therefore be disseminated more widely and used to attract local stakeholders and keep them engaged. Also the website presents this information in the “Why to join” section. It’s strongly recommended that coordinators use the ICC website as a source of information since it contains news, a database of good practices, normative/background/thematic documents, and it’s very often updated*).
- Cities should create local ambassadors to encourage and support joint initiatives with international interest.
- The Council of Europe – supported by the cities coordinators, could systematically ask Mayors to deliver public statements about specific topics or on specific occasions (*like it was the case for the [2018 International Migrants Day](#)*).
- Introducing profiles, as a showcase for cities. (*At the moment each city has a dedicated page on ICC website which should include a short description or mission statement, information on the elected Mayor, reference to its best practices, as well as its ICC Index assessment and Intercultural profile report. However, the Council needs feedback and information from the cities to be able to keep these pages updated and alive*).
- Cities coordinators could facilitate short translations themselves, and partnering with universities and their students for longer documents. Cities could produce a 2 pager at least once a year about the local and international dimension of their work within the ICC programme and network.



Ideal network – Team 4

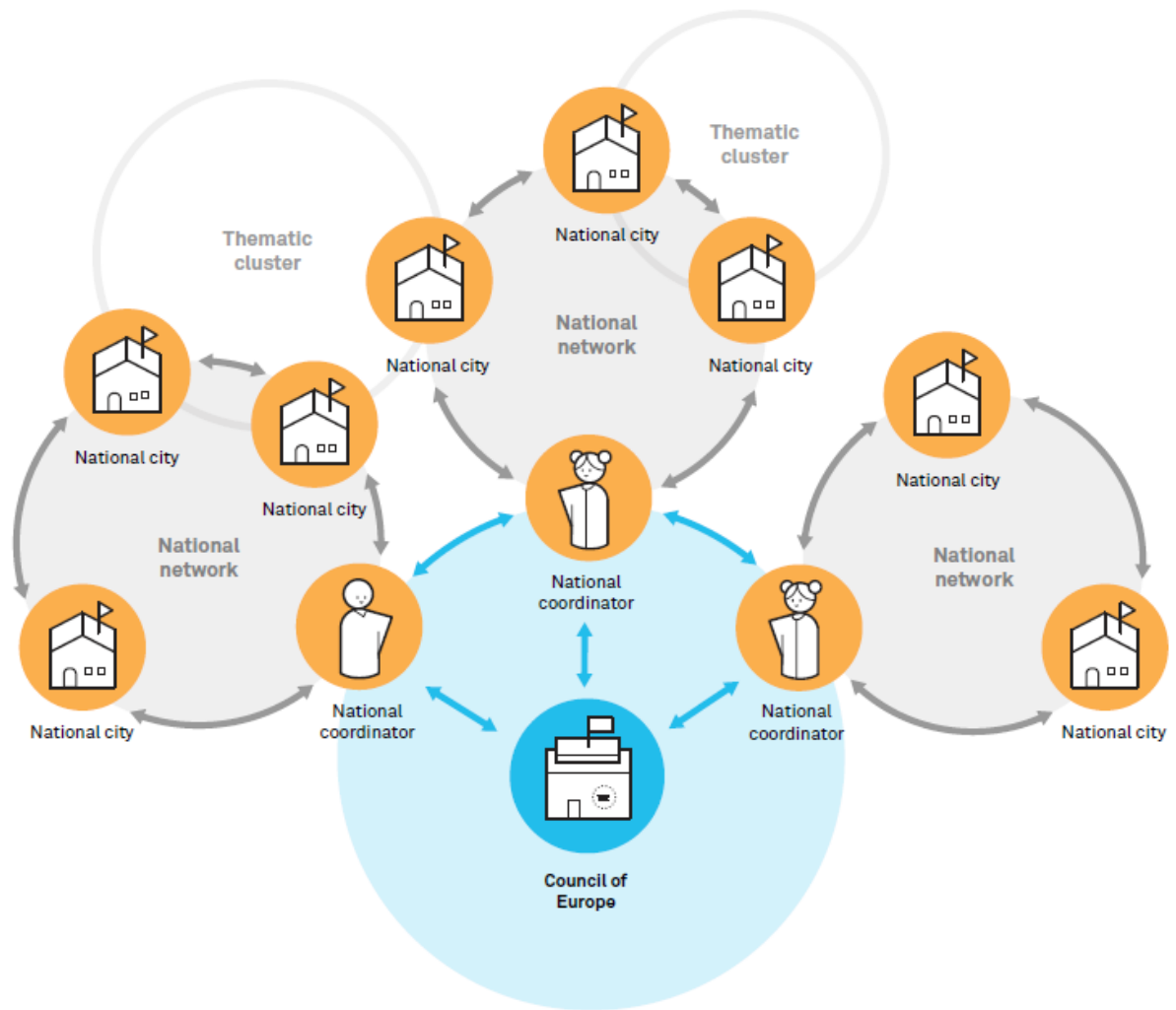
Team 4 imagined a network where the Council of Europe is the central node, with national networks around.

All tools and resources would be managed by CoE and provided to national coordinators, who would communicate with each other.

Thematic groups would also be in place: cities would focus on a topic they share. "Cities" would not only be municipalities, but also the networks they have (e.g. NGOs). Thus, the new ICC network would be a sort of "network of networks".



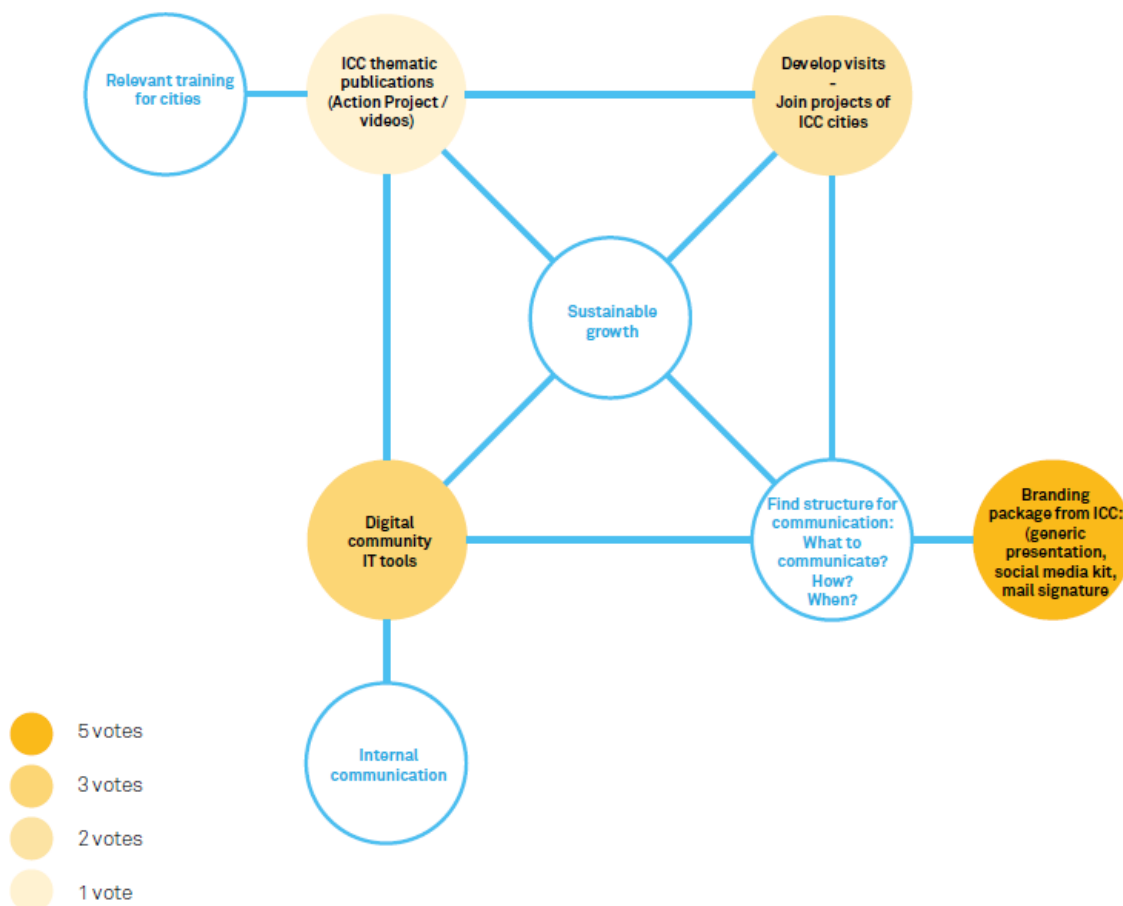
Benefits	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearer structure • Efficiency • Effective use of resources • Topic-based approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication (multi-level) • Lack of resources • Sharing knowledge • The focus on thematic groups might bring workload on cities (if they take the lead)



The **strategy** of this model covers the topic of communication, with a focus on:

- Providing (from CoE) an ICC branding package including an ICC generic presentation, that cities would use for all actions or events linked with the intercultural approach (e.g. in the mail signature, on social media, at the city hall, etc.); the package would include precise rules and guidelines to follow. The aim is to reinforce external communication about the ICC goals and principles.

- Exploring different ways of communicating, making a better use of digital community IT tools. This could for instance include asking cities to report their best practices through short videos. Short videos could be produced by cities also to illustrate pilot or other interesting actions.
- Training cities to let them understand that what they are doing is valuable and important. Too often people implementing intercultural actions in the field do not realise that they are actually shaping a good practice that may be interesting for other cities. Increasing the number of expert visits, promoting city-to-city visits, could help create knowledge to share within the whole network (provided CoE is kept informed).
- Identifying city's own strengths can also be done by promoting peer-to-peer trainings provided by local staff.

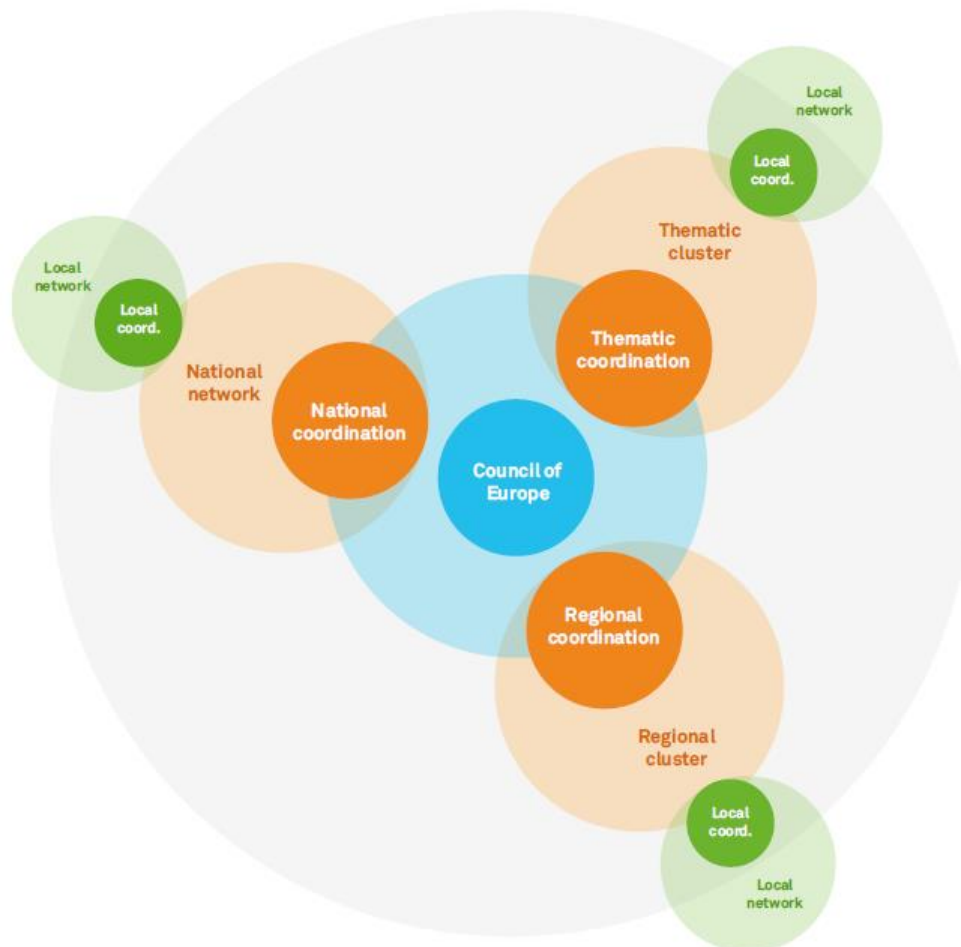


3.4 Overall conclusions of the working groups

By looking at the four “ideal networks”, it is possible to highlight key insights which appear in more than one group. The insights talk about possible directions that the ICC programme could pursue in the future. These are:

- **Working in clusters:** International cities and cities in national networks join thematic and/or geographical clusters. They have time to set their priorities, build trust and lead projects together.
- **Distributed responsibility:** The workload is distributed between different roles. Cluster coordinators or experts could be a link between the clusters of cities and the Council.
- **Active communication:** Cities actively exchange feedback and best practices, both with other cities and the Council.
- **Building/engaging local networks:** ICC leverages local stakeholders (NGOs, companies, academia), who actively collaborate as a local network to better implement and give visibility to the programme.
- **Opening dialogue:** ICC cities build a conversation with other similar programmes.

The “ideal” ICC network should be based on active collaboration, communication, exchange of feedback and best practices. This collaboration will be more relevant when working in clusters. This means groups of international and national cities should join together to work on common topics, or issues which are common in a geographical area. Roles might be rethought (e.g. experts or other stakeholders) to ensure the cluster coordination. This would also facilitate the communication of the cluster with the Council. Each city would engage its own local network of stakeholders (or other programmes as well), to ensure a meaningful implementation of the programme.



4. ICC PRIORITY PLAN FOR 2020-2022

It was agreed to prepare a workplan having in mind the next three years as a timeline. **A survey will be circulated to cities in January 2020 to prioritise actions and formalize commitments.**

More time and resources from Strasbourg will be devoted to developing – or simplifying/ updating - practical tools for coordinators in order to ensure that they can use better the ICC content and provide feedback on their own work. Due to the very reduced size of the ICC team, prioritisation of activities will be needed so to privilege quality over quantity.

Cities should help by complying with at least a set of minimum requirements for participation, including feedback and communication (for instance, cities will be called to respond to an annual detailed survey about their policies, the use they make of ICC tools, and the priority themes they want to be covered by the programme).

More ICC documents will be translated into various languages (joint effort by CoE and by cities/national networks). Additional efforts will be made to organise a few meetings and activities specifically for Mayors and high officials in the city administration.

In order for the network to continue to function well despite its growing size, cities will be encouraged to organise themselves into thematic and regional clusters so to work more closely with each other with a lighter involvement from the ICC team. These clusters will not only create synergies between their members but also produce materials that can be used by the entire ICC membership. The work on impact measurements will be continued as it is of crucial importance for all stakeholders.

Below, a non-exhaustive list of the activities and thematic areas of work that came out from the last session of the meeting and that should convert into the forthcoming 3-years programme of work.

Tools/Products	Action by	Tentative schedule
Survey on the use of ICC tools	ICC team (with cities as respondents)	2019-2020
Organisation of a meeting of ICC national network coordinators	ICC team + coordinators of national networks	First trimester 2020 (to be renewed every year)
Mission description of ICC Coordinators	ICC team (with cities to lobby with their Mayors)	2020
Guidelines for ICC Coordinators	ICC team + Dudelage, ICC-UA, Haifa, Rochester (any other? Turin? Lisbon?)	2020
Checklist for evaluation of projects/practices	ICC team + Montréal, Barcelona, Dudelage, Paris	2020
ICC branding tools and guidelines and vectorial logo translated in ICC languages	ICC team + Comm & IT experts (with cities making systematic use of them)	2020
ICC Charts for Index analysis	ICC team + CoE IT department	2019-2020
Welcoming pack for new cities	ICC team + RECI, Klaksvik, Maribyrnong (any other?)	2020-2021
Finalisation of the Intercultural	ICC team + expert(s) + small group of	2020-2021

Citizenship test	volunteering cities	
Elaboration of smart indicators for impact assessment of intercultural actions	ICC team + IGO + expert(s)	2020-2022
ICC Index reports	Experts alone	Every year
ICC Intercultural city profiles	Experts	Every year
ICC Newsletter	ICC Team based on news provided by the cities	Bi-monthly, every year
ICC Calendar of activities	ICC Team	(It's already included in the newsletter and available online)
ICC Database of good practices	Updated by ICC team. Cities to periodically send description of the practice, in narrative style, and good English ready for publishing	Every year
Campaigns on International Days (including the one of languages)	Draw a list and agree (through the survey) on which ones to jointly celebrate and how	Every year
Translation and layout of ICC latest publications	ICC team (cities to provide translations when possible)	As appropriate

Events/Activities	Action by	Year
Support to National networks	ICC team + national network coordinators	Every year
Meeting of ICC coordinators	ICC team (any city to host the next one?)	Every year, one meeting per year
Inclusive Integration Policy Lab (possibly through a new intergovernmental Committee)	ICC team + experts support for working documents (any city to host the next ones?)	2 meetings per year
ICC Expert's visits	Organised by ICC team but attended by Experts alone in 2020 (with ICC team joining again as of 2021 if possible)	Every year
ICC Thematic event	ICC Team (but no event in 2020)	Rescheduled as of 2021
Georgian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe	Event on Valuing diversity, combating discrimination and strengthening inclusion: what are the keys for successful policies?	2020
ICC Study visit(s)	ICC Team based on invitation by cities. Ioannina (Greece) will host a Study visit for national and local authorities on inclusive policies for refugee reception in 2020.	Once per year, every year
ICC city-to-city visits or thematic projects run by 1, 2 or more cities	Through grant agreement based on project proposals from cities	On-demand, through grants based on proposals by cities partnering in small groups, and depending availability of resources
Mayors and Directors meetings	Organised by the ICC team but Cities to identify topics, offer hosting in attracting venue, and ensuring high level participation.	2020? 2021?

	The first one could be organized instead/on top of the meeting of Coordinators in 2020. Otherwise not before 2021.	
Inclusive Integration Academies	Organised by ICC team with experts, targeting several cities (under regional or national context).	On-demand depending availability of resources

Thematic clusters	Action by	Year
Anti-rumours Escape Rumours Game	RECI and the ARS youth Summit (with ICC support if needed)	2020
Anti-rumours Index	RECI (any volunteer for translation and testing?)	2020
Intercultural competence	Cities of Klaksvik, Montréal, ICC-UA, Kirklees, Città del Dialogo, RECI + Rochester + experts (in autonomy but with ICC support)	2020-2021
Intercultural communication	RECI, Kirklees, others? (in autonomy but with ICC support)	2020-2021
Undocumented migrants and strategic litigation	Montréal + Coordinator of ICC UA (any other)	?
Engagement with business sector	Kirklees, others?	?

Regional cluster	Action by	Year
?	?	?

